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## URBAN CAUCUS, COUNCIL EXPLORE ROLES

GREENWICH, Conn. -- Members of the Episcopal Urban Caucus joined the Executive Council for a special session as the two bodies explored ways to share the Episcopal Church's urban mission.

The meeting took place at the June 4-6 session of the Council at Seabury House here in response to concerns expressed by Council members at their February meeting. At the time of that meeting, the Urban Bishops' Coalition and the Church and City Conference were meeting in Indianapolis to form the new Caucus and a resolution passed Council calling for a study and report of the Caucus work.

In a special order of business introduced by the Council's standing committee on Education for Mission and Ministry, the Rev. Lloyd Casson, president of the Caucus, called "ministry on behalf of and by the people of the cities the most exciting venture in the Episcopal Church." He described the growth of the Caucus from the 1976 beginnings of the Urban Bishops' Coalition through the series of hearings held throughout the country to the Indianapolis meeting.

Casson noted the varied backgrounds of Caucus and hearing participants and said: "It is increasingly clear that cities are merely the focal point of degeneration, degradation and death that is a part of our entire nation."

He said the Caucus was in the process of developing networks to communicate models of ministry, bolster advocacy training, strategy and theological reflection in the areas of parish revitalization, energy, arms and economic issues.

Casson was joined in the presentation and earlier committee discussions by the Rev. George Regas, convenor of the Caucus Arms Race group, Louis Schoen, convenor of the economic issues task group and Julio Torres and Mattie Hopkins of the Caucus executive committee.

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The group called on the national Church structures to support the models the Caucus hopes to develop and Casson noted that the Caucus had a unique role as a bridge between the national structures and "the people in the field who are struggling to make sense of their ministries."

"In the final analysis, it is a support system," Casson said. "We will be on the other side knocking on doors sometimes, and making it difficult for you as you will for us when you're not able to take the kinds of positions that we think you ought to. I don't believe that that means that we are out of sorts totally. It really is working together if we understand the purpose of the Caucus."

The Caucus presentation was part of the report of the Education for Mission and Ministry standing committee, a report that included a proposed employment practices policy that some Council members found inadequate.

The Committee offered the policy in response to a General Convention resolution calling on the Council to design and implement an affirmative action program for non-discriminatory employment. Council members, led by Dr. Paul Neuhauser of Iowa, argued that the proposed policy dealt only with non-discrimination and failed to address a policy of active affirmative action.

The Council finally passed a resolution referring the proposal to a standing committee of Council to be chosen by the Presiding Bishop.

In other action relating to the committee report, the Council asked the Church Center Christian education and public issues offices to develop a study-action guide on disarmament issues and agreed to the employment of additional temporary help in the office of youth and college ministries to work with conscientious objection registration if Congress reinstitutes the draft.

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